

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION ARCHIVES

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA

November 28, 1941

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Dr. W. Weaver  
Rockefeller Foundation  
49 West 49th Street  
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Weaver:

Some months ago Dr. Tatum and I started a new project on biochemical genetics of the pink bread mold Neurospora. The results to date have been exceedingly encouraging. I am enclosing a copy of a preliminary report of this work which is to appear in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. Since this note was written we have more than doubled the number of mutants for known syntheses. Among these are mutants unable to synthesize nicotinic acid (two different ones) and methionine. We now have three mutants concerned with the synthesis of vitamins present in yeast but not replacable by known vitamins. In addition we have a mutant unable to synthesize what appears to be a basic amino acid not yet known chemically. We are convinced the progress of the work to date indicates that we have an approach not only useful in biochemical genetics but of great potential value to biochemistry itself. Simple and reliable vitamin and amino acid assay methods are without much doubt going to be a by-product of the work.

In certain aspects of our work, such as isolating and determining the chemical nature of new vitamins and amino acids, we feel that we do not have facilities adequate to push these things as effectively as we'd like. After discussing various possibilities with Professor Taylor, President Wilbur and others, it would appear that there might be a number of advantages of trying to work out some kind of a cooperative arrangement with Merck and Company, or some other similar concern. For one thing, Merck's have a series of yeast fractions already separated which, if available to us, should enable us to identify new vitamins in short order. We are aware, however, that there may be disadvantages in any tie-up with a commercial concern and that such questions as manufacturing rights and possible patents relating to any new substances that might be of commercial importance should be carefully thought about in advance of commitments of any kind. In this connection we should very much like to have any suggestions or advice you may care to give us. In fact we feel that from our standpoint it would be desirable to go over these matters in person with you. If you agree that there might be advantages in doing this, and if a meeting can

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be arranged. I am prepared to come east sometime near the 15th of December and could readily arrange to see you either in Washington or New York.

I shall be very glad to hear what you think about a meeting such as I have suggested and, if you think it worth while, to have you indicate when and where such a meeting could be held most conveniently from your standpoint.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



G. W. Beadle

GWB:mc

CC:Dr.C.V.Taylor